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A BISHOP OF A PRIMITIVE TYPE.

WHEN the beautiful parish church of Leeds was consecrated in 1841, the figures of the archbishop of York and the bishop of Ripon were a conspicuous and interesting part of the spectacle; but they created less sensation than the tall and meagre, but venerable figure of another bishop who accompanied them, and whose name and designation came upon the public ear with a feeling of comparative strangeness. It was, indeed, a somewhat bewildering novelty to most people present, to hear that this ancient prelate was a Scotch one—for, in the general unimportance of Scottish affairs in the south, even the fact of there being an episcopal, though unestablished, church maintaining its ground amongst the Presbyterian communions of the north, is scarcely known. So it was—the person in question was Dr Low, bishop of Ross, to all clerical intents and purposes as much as Dr Vernon Harcourt was archbishop of York, though bearing no recognised secular rank or place under that designation. The sight of the northern bishop, however, in his canonicals, taking part in an august ceremony, was nothing, after all, very remarkable. To have really appreciated the status and character of the man, it would have been necessary to go to a very different scene.

Can a southern reader put himself to the trouble of following me to the further shore of the Firth of Forth, where gray hills slope down to the sea, and the coast is studded at intervals of one or two miles with old-fashioned seaports, so grim, and worn, and dreary, that one would suppose the mason's trowel had not been at work in any of them for a century. In one, called Pittenweem, perched for the most part on a cliff overhanging the waves, there is, on the verge of that cliff, an irregular old white building, which, on a little inquiry, you would find to be the patched-up remains of an ancient priory. Enter it from a rude court on the land-side, and you find merely one or two plain rooms, such as a second-class tradesman might occupy. A middle-aged woman shews you in; and in the homely parlour, between a table covered with books and a small fire, sits a thin old man, in faded, nay, to speak the honest truth, threadbare black clothes, of the cut of a former age. This, sir, is Bishop Low, at his studies, and the female who shewed you in, is his sole attendant. She has just removed the remains of a single haddock which formed his dinner; and if you come back in a few hours, you will find him enjoying the cup of weak tea which forms the only luxury of his home-life. He is a learned, diligent, and efficient prelate; also the acting pastor of a congregation which

meets in the little unpretending chapel at the head of the avenue. But no palace, no carriage, no purple liveries are his. In celibate simplicity he has lived for sixty years in this humble mansion, realising rather the bishops of the second than those of the nineteenth century; and out of an income of perhaps £250, sparing fully two-thirds for objects connected with religion. While denying himself all but the barest necessities of life, and turning the envelopes of his correspondents to enclose his answers to them, this 'Israelite indeed' has devoted £8000 to the endowment of a bishopric, and given nearly £3000 more to other ecclesiastical objects. Verily, his was a life and position of little external account in the world; yet it is not without its moral dignity and force. His is the glory of glories—that of being self-denying, as well as self-devoting, for the good of others.

The good bishop died last January, somewhat over eighty-six years of age, and having been rather more than sixty-seven years an ordained clergyman. He considered himself, in March last year, when I saw him for the last time, as probably the clergyman of oldest standing in the island. He bore a character even more remarkable still, for he was the last survivor of the Scottish Episcopal clergy who, on principle, declined to pray for the reigning family. It was certainly very curious to converse in 1854 with a minister who had professedly lived in obedience to Charles III.! He mentioned that such was his predicament for rather less than a year after his ordination in 1787—the clergy of his church only agreeing to pray for George III. and his family after the death of the unfortunate Chevalier in the ensuing year. Now that Bishop Low is gone, our amiable Sovereign may have, I believe, the satisfaction of considering that there is not a living clergyman in her dominions who ever was professedly an enemy of her house, or the partisan of any rival claimant of the throne. But it may be a surprise to her to learn, that till the death of this venerable person in January of the present year, she could not have had that satisfaction.

The good old man had seen many changes in his time; for in a country so progressive as ours, a public life of seventy years embraces not a little. When he came to minister in the east of Fife in 1790, he found a neighbourhood full of resident gentry, whose style of life was comparatively simple and familiar. They all dined at four o'clock, and when a friend or two called in the forenoon, they were usually pressed to stay and partake of that meal; and thus much good-humoured sociality prevailed. In later times, the successors of these people dine at seven, and there is no intercourse except upon formal invitation. There is more elegance now,

but it is attended with less good-humour. Life seems altogether a more serious affair than it was then. In those days, the Episcopal Church was only beginning to get clear of the penal statutes which had depressed it so much after it had lost its state connection and dignity at the Revolution. It had less than forty congregations, and only one in the whole diocese of Glasgow. Bishop Low lived to see the entire number tripled; while for the one then formed in the Glasgow diocese, there are now thirty. These facts seem to have some general interest, as shewing the advance of toleration amongst us.

I must now endeavour to delineate the bishop in his most prominent personal character, as a late representative of the extinct party of the Scottish Episcopalian Jacobites. Born in Forfarshire, where this party was unusually strong, and brought up amongst those who had acted and suffered in the cause of the Stuarts in 1745, he had become acquainted with all their distinctive peculiarities of temper and opinion, and picked up an immense amount of curious anecdote regarding the party in past ages. It could not be said that he was himself, in any active style, a Jacobite, although he probably would have been so, if he had lived a little earlier. Having survived into an age which could view the whole matter objectively, and therefore coolly, he seemed chiefly to see the whimsicality of the position of the Jacobites, and to relish the humours which arose therefrom: hence his conversation was full of quaint and comic stories regarding the relics of the party; all of them told with a point and brevity, and a twinkle of the keen gray eye, which gave them infinite relish to the hearers. Indeed, it may be regarded as somewhat doubtful whether he was not led to become such a chronicler as he was of Jacobite sayings and doings, chiefly by a strong sense of the ludicrous with which he had been endowed by nature. Not that there was the slightest taint of the derisive in the bishop's feelings—he, in fact, sympathised too much for that—but it was evident, from the intense comic expression which he gave to most of his narrations, that, but for their jocular character, they would have had little attention from him.

He used to give amusing sketches of the conduct of the very earnest members of the party, when tried in temper by the instances of conformity to the spirit of the times which were constantly taking place around them. One old gentleman, when told that his son had lapsed so far as to accept the situation of superintendent of the Hulks, said, if the lad had only told him he was so anxious for a place, he believed he could have got him made hangman of Perth! Another, calling on the Honourable Misses Murray, sisters of the Chief-justice Mansfield, found them reconciled to the actual dynasty to a most vexatious degree, in a flutter of delight with some portraits of the royal family, which their brother had sent them, and in every second sentence referring to the *people above*. At length, unable to endure it a moment longer, he broke away in fury, exclaiming: 'What care I though they were a' up the lum!'—lum being Scotch for chimney.

The resolution, adopted with the good-will of the majority in most congregations, to introduce the prayers for the reigning family, left a minority of the old-fashioned people in extreme, though helpless, indignation. All they could do was to keep shuffling their feet and blowing their noses whilst these prayers were said. Old Oliphant of Gask, kept at home by gout, on hearing of the backsliding of a particular clergyman who used to come to minister privately at Gask, and was always hospitably entertained there, sent him the old surplice and gown which he used to keep in the house for those purposes, with a pointed request that he would never attempt to shew face there again. It happened that the king took his unfortunate illness soon after the Jacobites commenced

praying for him. 'Ye see what ye've done,' said an old stickler to his clergyman; 'the honest man has never had a day to do weel since ever ye took him by the hand.'

The bishop had many anecdotes illustrating the difficulties to which the Jacobites were put, in order to get their sentiments expressed without the usual consequences of treason and sedition. This same Oliphant of Gask, for instance, had two favourite toasts, 'The King' and 'The Restoration,' both of them excusable as referring to legitimate objects, yet always pronounced in such a significant manner as to leave no doubt that he meant James, not George, and referred to a potential, not a past restoration. One day, when an officer of the army was dining with him, he felt somehow rather nervous about giving the latter toast; so, after 'The King' had been given, and accepted by the two in their respective senses, he propounded, 'The King *again*, sir. Ye can have no objection to that.' On an occasion when a certain Bishop Dunbar attended an entertainment given by an officer at Peterhead, 'The King' being given, the bishop quietly added the word 'rightful'; whereupon the host hastily called out to him: 'What, sir! Rightful! that is not King George.' 'I am sure,' said the guest calmly, 'if you believe that King George is not our rightful sovereign, I have no wish to dispute it.'

Though the present moment is alone our own, and Horace counsels us to enjoy it, most people find a high enjoyment in being witcht out of it. To sit for an evening with Bishop Low, and encourage him to talk of old times, was sure to be attended with this charming effect. We felt that we lived quite a hundred years back, among people of a stamp entirely different from our actual contemporaries. Men who had fought at Sheriffmuir came before us in their full natural lineaments, originally gallant and aspiring, but now soured by disappointment, like a generous wine that has been kept too long. Foiled by Whiggery in all the essential points, they were reduced to employing against it those weapons of wit and poetical fancy which cannot be so easily found treasonable. There were troops of Fife lairds, who, meeting at some favourite tavern, over a newly imported butt of claret, did not part till they had drunk the same dry. There were broken-down Forty-five men, obliged in their old days to live in a great measure by their wits. More striking figures still started up in the wilds of Appin—gaunt old Highlanders that had cloven the heads of the British infantry at Gladsmuir, and still dreamed of the Prince coming back some day, in all the graces of a never-failing youth, to set all to rights that had so long been wrong. Our venerable friend knew well the proud Ogilvy, by whose shoulder-belt the Prince held, as he marched by night over Shap Fell, fast asleep. He was intimate with a Scotch Episcopalian minister, who was so pressed by the harsh laws imposed on his church, that a child which was to be baptised by him had to be smuggled into his house in a fish-woman's creel. He knew Colquhoun Grant, the writer, who in his youth pursued a couple of dragoons from Preston all the way to the castle of Edinburgh, where, finding them taken in and protected, he left quivering in the wooden gate that dirk with which he was prepared, on their resistance, to have despatched them. Equally familiar was he with that Ross of Pitcalnie, who wiled a loan of forty pounds out of Grant's hands by an adroit reference to this Preston feat, forty years after it took place, and coolly remarked to another old companion-in-arms, that he had still 'Falkirk' to come and go upon, and would not give it for less than eighty. His first congregation included the Erakines of Kellie, children of the earl who figured as far as a rather weak brain would allow in the affair of 1745; also the Lindsays of Balcarres, whose father, the Earl

of Balcarres, had fought for the old Chevalier in 1715. Another of his flock was Sir Robert Sinclair of Longformacus, who gave him many anecdotes of the Cavalier notables of an earlier day—particularly one regarding an ancient Aberdeen Highlander, who came to the rebel army at Perth in 1715, accompanied by his sons, professing not to be able to do much himself; but if then, if his sons didn't do their duty, 'can I no sheet them?' said he, shewing a large pistol in his belt. And another not less remarkable, respecting a Highlander of Montrose's wars, whom, strange to say, Sir Robert had seen and conversed with—who used to remark: 'It was a braw day, Kilsyth: at every stroke of my broadsword I cut an ell o' breeks!' alluding to the lowland attire of the militia whom Montrose cut up so unmercifully on that occasion. The bishop himself, while spending some of his youthful days in the west Highlands, was on intimate terms with a Mr Stuart of Ballahulish, who had not long before had a servant of a style of character which may be said to take us fairly back into the middle ages. Led by a grateful sense of the man's long and faithful services, Mr Stuart had gone to his bedside and given him the assurance that, when he died, he should have honourable burial in the church-yard of Glenorchy, among Mr Stuart's own children. 'Your bairns,' said the expiring Celt, 'were never company for me, dead or alive. But I'll tell you what to do with me. When the breath is out of my body, take my sword and break my back; then lay me across a beast, and carry me to the graves of my forefathers. There, lay me with my face to those scoundrels the Camerons, and put my claymore by my side!' So saying, he died.

With that intense relish for the humorous which marked his character, the worthy bishop seemed to have gathered and preserved every whimsical or comic thing that had come in his way through life. We cannot attempt to follow him through this more general line; but yet there were a few pleasantries which bear such a smack of the old world about them, that they almost become historical, and may be thought entitled to some notice. Of such a character was his account of a certain Sir Michael Malcolm, who was noted for having descended to the trade of a joiner in London, and, by virtue of his Jacobite associations, was on the scaffold with Kilmarnock and Balmerino as their undertaker; on which occasion, an English lady of some fortune, who was present as a spectator, fell so much in love with him as in time to become his wife. Sir Michael, however, with a fine outside, had a commonplace mind, and was devoid of all polite learning. So one day, when presiding at a justice court in Kirkcaldy, he was rather hard bested by a sharp-witted shoemaker, whom he was condemning to a fortnight's imprisonment for some trivial offence. 'I want to know,' said the culprit, addressing Sir Michael, 'what is the meaning of these Latin words in the sentence?' 'Give that fellow two months more for contempt of court,' cried the conscious baronet.

Equally good in its way was a story of a certain General Anstruther, who represented the East of Fife burghs at the time of the Porteous riots, and gained such extreme unpopularity by voting with the government against the city of Edinburgh, that, having to cross from Fife to England, he deemed it most prudent to avoid the usual ferry, and get a couple of fishermen to take him from Elie over to East Lothian. On the passage, he fell into conversation with the two men. 'Well, I suppose, you fellows are all great smugglers?' 'Oh, ay,' said one of them; 'but I dinna think we ever smuggled a general before!'

Of a different stamp, partaking more of the humorous than the witty, was a legend regarding a certain Mrs Balfour of Denbog, in Fife, who flourished about 1770. The nearest neighbour of Denbog was a Mr David Paterson, who had the character of being a good

deal of a humorist. One day when Paterson called, he found Mrs Balfour engaged in one of her half-yearly brewings, it being the custom in those days each March and October to make as much ale as would serve for the ensuing six months. She was in a great pother about bottles, her stock of which fell far short of the number required, and asked Mr Paterson if he could lend her any.

'No,' says Paterson, 'but I think I could bring you a few graybeards that would hold a good deal; perhaps that would do.' The lady assented, and appointed a day when he should come again, and bring his graybeards with him. On the proper day, Mr Paterson made his appearance in Mrs Balfour's little parlour.

'Well, Mr Paterson, have you brought your graybeards?'

'Oh, yes. They're down stairs waiting for you.'

'How many?'

'Nae less than ten.'

'Well, I hope they're pretty large, for really I find I have a good deal more ale than I have bottles for.'

'I see warrant ye, mem, ilk ane o' them will haud twa gallons.'

'Oh, that will do extremely well.'

Down goes the lady.

'I left them in the dining-room,' said Paterson.

When the lady went in, she found ten of the most bibulous old lairds of the north of Fife. She at once perceived the joke, and entered into it. After a hearty laugh had gone round, she said she thought it would be as well to have dinner before filling the graybeards; and it was accordingly arranged that the gentlemen should take a ramble, and come in to dinner at two o'clock.

The extra ale is understood to have been duly disposed of.

We close with several regrets—first, that our limits forbid us to go further in our humble attempt to sketch the character and conversation of this interesting old man; and, second, that the exigencies of light literature prevent our giving in the sketch, such as it is, the merited prominence to the more serious aspects of the life of Bishop Low. We can only entertain a hope, founded on the assumed candour and good-nature of our readers, that they will not allow anything we have said to derogate from a character which, with infinite simplicity, geniality, and innocent playfulness, combined, in an extraordinary degree, true, though unostentatious piety, and a zeal for objects beyond the personal and the present. In all our own intercourse with the good old man, during the past twenty-eight years, we never found our heartfelt and abiding veneration for his inherent and extrinsic dignity to be in the least abated by our enjoyment of his old-world, and perfectly inoffensive pleasantries. So may it be with others!

M A R E T I M O.

CHAPTER XXIV.

JUSTO.

THE marchese received Walter in a private chamber of the vice-regal palace of Palermo. His manner was affectionate. He referred immediately to the fact, that he owed his own, and probably his daughter's life, to the Englishman's courage; pressed his hands fervently, and hinted a hope that an opportunity of expressing gratitude in some practical way would present itself; but he carefully avoided any expansive conversation in which his own intentions with respect to Paolo might be made manifest. 'He is like a lady,' said Walter, writing an account of this interview, 'who talks of Shakspeare, because certain that if she talks of love she will consent before the period that coquetry has marked.' This was, perhaps, too good-humoured a

way of viewing the matter; and so the impatient Paolo thought; but as the marchese himself, when he looked back and considered his state of mind on that occasion, could not venture to say what he would have done had things turned out differently, we shall not pretend to decide.

'I will not disgust you by talking too much of gratitude,' said the marchese at length, 'especially as I am going to ask a favour of you. Perhaps you remember that Jeppo in his last moments, when he confusedly exculpated the father of your friend, used a name which seemed at the time strange to me.'

'I recollect perfectly,' replied Walter; 'it was that of Justo.'

'For some time, in my anxious meditations on this subject,' proceeded the marchese, 'I despaired of making use of that hint; but now I think I have obtained a clue.'

'Paolo knows the man well,' interrupted Walter; 'he is an inhabitant of the Island of Maretime. We saw him on the night—when—I was fortunate enough to be of some service to you. Our young friend used often to meet him when strolling about the island, and sometimes thought he wished to speak to him in private. But he now believes that if he knew anything important, he would have found means of telling it.'

'He was well watched,' replied the marchese, blushing slightly. 'Besides, you know that when we compared what Jeppo said to us, we found he seemed doubtful of that man's willingness to speak. From certain sources'—the marchese alluded to Mosca's anonymous denunciations from Maretime, which some one had analysed and laid before him, with comments and additions from other of the police archives—'I have learned a few facts. He appears to have been in former years a pirate or smuggler on the coast of Sicily, and to have retired on the produce of his plunder. If I can trust the indications given me, I should say that he wished to avoid all communication with his old friends or successors. He was bound, however, by particular friendship for one Giacomo, one of your lawless acquaintances.'

The marchese smiled at first, but became grave again when he saw Walter's face darken.

'He was also in correspondence with Jeppo, who tried to corrupt the fidelity of that immaculate officer Signor Girolamo di Georgio, and seduce him to deliver the Prisoner whom he held in the name of the king of the Two Sicilies.'

It was now Walter's turn to smile; but the marchese took no notice, and went on.

'I have good reason to believe that this said Justo is the depository of secrets which it much imports us to know. If I recollect rightly, there was some quarrel between him and the commandant of Maretime about the time I was there; I heard of it vaguely, but paid no attention. I think a soldier, employed to notice things, whispered it to me. No matter; it is quite certain that he left the island, and has not been heard of since. Now, you seem to know many persons who have intimacies in places where officials are not well received; will you undertake to find this Justo, and make him speak? Whatever charges rise up against him, he shall be forgiven—thanked—rewarded—if he make the past clear to me, and enable me to proceed towards the future without doubt and hesitation.'

From the warmth with which the marchese uttered the last words, Walter could not fail to understand his meaning; he at once, though with little confidence in success, undertook to perform the service required of him, and felt that it would be good for the comfort of his mind to be again engaged in an action requiring energy and perseverance. During the lull, indeed, that had followed the exciting incidents in which he had been engaged for the happiness of Paolo, Walter had experienced a sense of loneliness and lassitude for

which he could scarcely account. He sighed sometimes for the feeling of reckless independence with which he had first set foot on the deck of the unfortunate *Marc Antoine*; since that day he had been many times in danger of death, had incurred heavy obligations, and had amply repaid them, and had formed many friendships. But the countenances of the marchese and his daughter, and even of Paolo, had already begun, as it were, to appear to him in profile: their eyes were directed towards a different quarter of the heavens. Luigi Spada was too much of a Sicilian, too much occupied with himself, to rouse a very lasting affection in the son of the North. Honest Mr Buck, it is true, vowed in sincerity eternal brotherhood and admiration; but even he was secretly sighing for the Bay of Naples, his cutter, his curiosities, Lina, and the counting-house of Messrs Thompson, Pulci, & Co. There was another figure, further off, which Walter's gaze loved to dwell on; but on the morning following the destruction of the Black Band, a veil of caution and reserve seemed to have dropped before it. Bianca had spoken at parting almost as if another meeting was problematical or unnecessary.

Walter left the marchese without having formed any definite plan of action. He asked to see Bianca and Angela, and was admitted into their presence. Paolo's wife was sitting apart, pensively gazing forth through the lattice over the brilliant expanse of the Bay of Palermo; Bianca, with affected industry, was attempting to use her pencil. They rose eagerly to welcome the Englishman, and of course began at once to talk of Paolo. What was he doing? How did he bear that time of suspense? Was he well in health? Was he hopeful? Walter felt, but suppressed, a movement of impatience. Was all the world to be ever occupied with the happiness of Paolo; and was he never to be regarded as anything but an auxiliary? Had he been more indifferent, he would have seen that Angela looked at them both with an indulgent smile, just as we look upon two actors groping about in sham darkness on the stage, close at hand, face to face, yet affecting to seek each other at opposite corners.

Bianca, we have already hinted, had been from the time of their first meeting in the Palazzo Belmonte at Messina, wonderfully impressed by the appearance and manners of Walter. In the storehouse of romantic sentiments, what she felt is usually labelled 'love at first sight'—a sin against propriety, which, so far as ladies are concerned, has gradually been well-nigh expelled from the world. To speak truth, however, this first favourable impression, not usually ineffaceable in healthy minds, may be received without treason against modesty. In Bianca's case, it may be justified in many ways: she had already seen and condemned the handsomest and most amiable men of her country and class. Some of them—rather attracted than scandalised by her resolute retreat from the threshold of religious life, and passing over her avowed passion for the arts—had made inquiries as to her fortune; they discovered it to be small; and, consequently, at the same time discovered that her uncle, Count Cacamo, was still living in the Sicilian mountains under the dreaded name of Jeppo. All, therefore, took themselves off the list of her admirers except two or three obstinate parasites of the marchese, who thought that Bianca's hand might lead them indirectly to honour and wealth. This was partly the reason why the proud young girl, long before she beheld Walter, had tried to persuade herself that she was created for a single and artistic life; and when sometimes she discovered that she had been sitting for hours before her easel without laying on a single touch—the hand that held the palette drooping by her side—angrily accused herself of idleness: for she would not understand that she shared the weakness of Angela, and was born for domestic happiness, not to seek public applause.

But at length, as we have seen, the colour of her thoughts was changed by the appearance of Walter. The abrupt frankness of his manner, which rather set off than concealed a natural gentleness, combined with a new type of beauty, in which the intellectual more than the sensuous was expressed, pleased her at once. During the various changes of position that so rapidly occurred in a single month, she learned to watch over the development of her own sentiments. It could not be concealed from her that Walter had felt the influence of her beauty; but at the same time it was impossible for her not to perceive that he had never given way to a simple impulse in her presence, but that the manifestation of his feelings was checked by what might be timidity, but might also be caution. Had she for a moment thought that his reserve arose from mere worldly motives; that he was calculating her probable fortune, or was even uncertain as to the absolute purity of her character, she would at once have chilled towards him for ever. But the truth is, that in some measure she appreciated his hesitation; instead of offending her, it forced her to turn back, as it were, upon herself, and endeavour to estimate her own value. At that time, the fame of victory, and the rather unreasoning partiality of romance—the influence of a literature resumed in the names of Scott and Byron—had exalted in some minds the character of the Englishman to an almost heroic level. 'If I have incurred, it may be that I have deserved his contempt,' thought Bianca, with exquisite humility, which she did not know was the first of virtues. Because Walter had the prudence to examine and curb his affections, we should style him inferior to that warm-hearted Sicilian girl, if it were not that his caution was also instigated in part by modesty; he tried to reason away a passion which might never be accepted. Perhaps most of those who complain of disappointed affections in after-life, have at least once played the sophist from cowardice, when they should have consulted only the yearnings of their heart; and this may be the reason of the stupid accusation against women, that genius never finds favour in their eyes.

Angela knew enough of the progress of her father's thoughts, to understand the importance he attached to the discovery of Justo. But what could she do? Nothing but implore Walter, rather by glances than words, once more to devote his energies to her service. Bianca thought that Luigi Spada was the best person to apply to; but Walter knew his fondness for elaborate intrigues, and hoped to find a better and shorter mode of proceeding; he remembered that on his way to the palace he had seen, sitting in the sun, eagerly talking, as they shared a huge juicy melon, two of his old comrades in adventure—Carlotto and Josefo, the faithful crew of Mr Buck's little cutter. If Justo's place of concealment was known among the sailors of the port, those two lads would be able to spread abroad that the man was wanted for no evil purpose. He explained his plan, and was set down by Angela as the very prince of policy; Bianca was less enthusiastic; and Walter went away but half satisfied with his interview.

The two lads had shifted their quarters—leaving no traces but various slips of melon-rind—by the time the Englishman sought for them, so that his ingenious scheme seemed likely to fail at the very outset. He strolled, however, down towards the port, hoping that accident would favour him; he paused before the house of Mr Bell the banker, and remembered that it was his duty to thank him for what he had done, and ask news of the pleasure-party. His appearance created quite a sensation in the office; all the clerks had heard accounts, more or less distorted, of his prowess. Mr Bell received him with open arms.

'All hail! great victor,' cried he in an exaggerated tone. 'Hadst thou failed, we should have set thee down as a madman; being successful, we crown thee!'

Walter briefly related what had happened since he had so unceremoniously left the *Santa Rosalia*—speaking like a table of contents, in his impatience to come to the point that then most interested him. Mr Bell attributed to his brevity and modesty the total omission of all notice of the single-handed charge he had made on the Black Band, and also of the desperate naval fight in which he had made the Marchese Belmonte prisoner. On hearing the name and qualities of Justo, however, the banker exclaimed:

'What if I could set you on the track? Shall I become worthy of mention by the Cervantes who will hereafter record your heroic exploits?'

Walter would have preferred hearing the name of any other historian; but good-humouredly promised to accept Mr Bell as a companion-hero.

'Well, then,' said that gentleman, 'you must know that the *Santa Rosalia* remained a couple of days in the port of Trapani before returning. On the home-voyage there was also a mysterious passenger—Unknown the Second, as Lord Augustus styled him; he had come in a great hurry from Maretimo, and was anxious to reach this city—an old wiry man, half-fisherman, half-farmer, taciturn, but apparently well to do. Is my imagination too active?—or may we not conclude we have found your friend?'

'There is every likelihood,' replied Walter; 'but what became of him?'

'You ask too much. They arrived yesterday, and Unknown the Second instantly disappeared; but you now know he is probably in Palermo.'

The information was valuable as far as it went; and Walter, refusing a pressing invitation to dinner, but promising to accept a bed, bade adieu to Mr Bell, and proceeded, as he originally intended, towards the port. Here he walked up and down until near evening, looking out in vain for the two lads. In his disappointment, he began to doubt whether he had really seen them that day. One had gone out of sight when he left the *Filippa*; the other had kept in inglorious concealment during all active operations.

However, on carefully taxing his memory, he felt certain that he had not been deceived; and hoped, if not on that evening, to be successful by perseverance on the morrow. He was just about to turn away from the neighbourhood of the port, when he perceived a long-nosed pale old man, with a red cap on his head, sauntering slowly along towards the door of a Trattoria, or eating-house—the external appearance of which promised that marine appetites and tastes would probably be consulted within.

'That is Pipo, as sure as life,' murmured Walter, whose first impulse was to go up and claim acquaintance at once. But he had heard the story of Gianetto: the worthy smuggler might not approve of being recognised in so public a place. Walter remembered that he had not dined; and pulling his travelling-cap over his eyes, entered the Trattoria on the heels of Pipo.

Business was slack that day; with the exception of one English master and his mate—already far gone on the liquid road to happiness—the two new-comers were the only guests. They sat down at separate tables, and were supplied spontaneously each with a huge dish of macaroni. Walter watched his time, when the mariners were beginning to excite each other to locomotion in a manner that threatened a speedy sleep, and when the waiter was out of the room.

'Signor Pipo,' said he in a low voice, 'we parted in a bleaker place than this.'

The smuggler hastily swallowed a long string of macaroni, and looked at his interlocutor with an expression of comic surprise, slightly mingled with alarm. However, he answered very bravely and sententially.

'Life is full of strange partings and strange meetings.'

When we sit down to dinner, who can tell what the dessert is to be?"

Seeing that he spoke in that tone, Walter transferred his dish to the smuggler's table, and they soon managed to understand each other, especially as the Englishman, true to his national character, called for a bottle of the best possible wine that could be got. Pipo knew a good deal about Justo—which was not surprising—for he seemed to know a good deal about everybody. According to him, the worthy of Maretimo was quite a model man; for he had not continued his lawless life a day longer than necessary. Having amassed enough to live on comfortably, he had prudently retired to enjoy himself in an out-of-the-way place, where he was not likely to brush against people whom he had previously met on rough occasions.

"I might probably put you in the way of seeing him," continued Pipo, who was inquisitive as well as cautious, "if I could understand your motive."

Walter thought it best to be tolerably communicative. The smuggler was pleased by his frankness.

"This is one of the few wise notions which the marchese has ever had," said he. "If he had spoken to the right people, instead of gnawing his own heart in silence, he might long ago have learned many things he cares about. I don't meddle with stories that concern other people; but even I could tell him a thing or two. Why, I have heard the girls sing in the villages all about Speranza: they pretend she loved Di Falco."

"For Heaven's sake," exclaimed Walter, "never breathe a word of that; it would ruin everything!"

"Truth is truth," replied Pipo sturdily; "but let me finish. The knowing say the contrary—that it was he loved her, silently, respectfully, because of his duty to his friend. I am not well informed on this matter, however. You are right in seeking for Justo; he must know, for he was owner of the vessel in which Speranza was carried away."

"This is very extraordinary!" said Walter. "Why did he take refuge on the very island where Girolamo di Georgio was in command? That officer was also present on the same occasion."

"He was," quoth Pipo with a nod, that shewed he knew more than he chose to tell; "but you are not well informed in the chronology of this business. Every one connected with that vessel was marked at once for terrific punishment; they disappeared right and left. Justo hastened to carry out a plan he had long thought of; and went to Maretimo before Di Georgio. Do you imagine that afterwards he hastened to claim acquaintance? Why, he avoided crossing the commandant's path for years. I suppose you know that the whole affair was arranged by Jeppo, who, they say, repented, and tried to whitewash himself before he died. But he was a sad fellow in those days; and the girls I speak of curse him in that song, for having helped to kidnap his own niece. That's the plain story."

Jeppo had evidently ceased to be the hero of the lawless world of Sicily since his recantation. Walter did not attempt to defend his character; but listened eagerly to Pipo's revelations. He began now to understand that the self-torture which the marchese had inflicted on himself was, to a certain extent, wilful; and more eagerly than ever desired to trace out the retreat of Justo.

"Well," said he, "you now understand my motives fully; will you assist me?"

"I will," replied Pipo; "but we must not be in any hurry; Justo is timid, and I am cautious. How can I send you a message without meeting you myself? Our people are becoming suspicious; and if I am seen talking with you, they will imagine I am going to repent, like Jeppo."

Walter mentioned Josefo and Carlotta.

"I know where to find the lads," quoth Pipo. "I made a point of speaking to them, for they would have been useful to us. But they are Neapolitans; timid, signor—timid!"

The Englishman promised to be at Mr Bell's house until noon next day; and leaving Pipo, after some sordid agreement about reward, hastened to inform the marchese of the partial success of his undertaking. He found him, with his daughter and Bianca, enjoying the cool of the evening on a balcony looking towards the sea. There was still constraint in that family; for the marchese would not, could not as yet—until he actually received the revelation, the approach of which he saw—speak of Paolo as his son. What Walter had to say, in the way he said it, seemed to relieve every breast of a considerable part of the burden that weighed on it. Bianca in that dim light was not afraid to exclaim: "Well done! Heaven seems to have decreed that all our happiness is to come from you, signor."

Instead of continuing his narrative, Walter paused to reflect on the import of these words, so that the marchese was obliged once or twice to say: "And afterwards? What then?"

It was agreed that the Englishman should endeavour to bring Justo to consent to an interview with the marchese. Soon afterwards he rose to retire.

"We receive to-morrow evening for the first time in state," said the marchese; "and we have a powerful reason for wishing all our friends to be present. None that love us must be away. Whatever happens, we count on you."

Angela, who seemed to perceive much meaning in these words, moved softly to her father's side, and took his hand, which he affected to withhold; whilst Bianca, in order that the embrace that followed might be private, drew Walter away from the balcony into the great room on which it opened. We tremble for the result. Will the frozen islander let go her hand without saying a single word more than "Good-night?" Bianca had been led to that position accidentally; but felt that this was the turning-point of her life, when it was too late to retreat. Her breast was already swelling with shame and injured pride, when she heard her own name, without any title or addition, pronounced very softly; and because she answered in the same tone, "Walter," shall we say that she was too lightly and easily won? This was nearly the sum of their conversation; for this was nearly all they had to say. When the barrier that keeps two souls apart suddenly breaks down, so that they can meet together, are many words of greeting necessary? "Bianca!"—"Walter!" The room was nearly dark; and no one saw, nor did they remember how often he stooped and kissed her brow where the tresses parted.

He walked rapidly along the moonlit streets, endeavouring not to contemplate his happiness too closely; he seemed afraid lest he could not bear it yet. Promenaders were out enjoying the balmy air, and he heard passionate voices whispering together as he passed. From retired streets and gardens, strains of music occasionally came. As he approached Mr Bell's house, an English melody, jollily chanted from the balcony, struck him in some of its notes as familiar. He went up, and found that Joseph Buck—abandoning Paolo, by agreement, to lonely expectation—had accompanied Luigi to the city in a carriage sent by some friends, and had laid himself out for the dinner which Walter had refused. He, too, had been received as a hero; and certainly he had drunk like one.

"You a man to keep appointments!" shouted he on seeing Walter; "here are two messengers, sent one after the other, for you. I know them well; one is called Josefo, the other Carlotta. To-morrow, I shall ask why they have deserted to the enemy: to-night, their business is with you."

"There are, indeed, a couple of lads in the kitchen;

O Hannibal of these days, by whom Pompey was defeated!' cried Mr Bell, who had no pretensions to accuracy of historical allusion at that moment.

Josefo came in, and taking Walter apart, said that he was sent by the smuggler.

'He wants to see you this very night,' he proceeded. 'You must accompany me alone, if you are not afraid.'

Walter, knowing the lad's timid character, smiled at this proviso, and said that he was ready to start at once. In spite of Mr Buck's valiant offers of escort, therefore, he went out with his guide, who took him down several narrow streets in the direction of a quarter inhabited chiefly by sailors. Pipò suddenly came to his side.

'I hope you have no absurd suspicions of me,' quoth the smuggler; 'but you have brought company.'

Mr Buck had followed with Carlotto, thinking that his friend was going into danger. He came forward when he saw that he was discovered, and begged to be of the party; Pipò recognised him, and consented with some unwillingness. The idea that his honour had been doubted annoyed him; however, he was soon pacified.

He took them into a house, where he was evidently lord and master.

'I shall now explain what we have to do,' said he. 'Justo is not so easy to deal with as I expected. As soon as I proposed an interview with you or the marchese, he took fright. A long time of comfort has made the man timid; he thinks every one is going to betray him. Now I for one am not; nor will I seem to be. Yet, what I have promised, I will perform.'

Walter thought it necessary to hint at an increased reward; after which Pipò said, that the man they sought had taken refuge in a retired house away from the city, about two miles along the shores of the bay.

'He knows the place of old,' said he; 'and knows, too, that not one of us dare go thither except in company of good men and true. I would not take two Sicilians for the world; but two Englishmen count as nothing. The neighbourhood is rather wild; the police do not care to be there at night—shall we go?'

The two friends were ready to go anywhere. Pipò, accordingly, guided them towards the gate of the town, and passed out with a facility that shewed him to be a man of good connections. The road led along the beach; and although the night was calm, they could hear the breaking of little waves on the pebbles as they proceeded. Walter could not refrain from taking Mr Buck's arm, and relating his interview with Bianca, not foreseeing that his jovial friend would stop every hundred yards to shake him by the hand, and wish him joy.

Not many minutes previously, another party had passed the gates, and taken the same direction. We already know that Girolamo di Georgio, on leaving Maretimo, was troubled only by one circumstance—namely, that Justo was abroad in Sicily. At Trapani, he learned accidentally that his enemy had gone to Palermo; and approached that city, therefore, in some doubt and trepidation. He had arrived that very morning; but instead of making his coming known, as he had intended, and as a favourite of the marchese was entitled to do, he modestly concealed himself, and debated the means by which he might indeed become immaculate; for, as we know, complete virtue was in his eyes complete absence of the proofs of sin. He had many friends of more than doubtful character in Palermo—knew, at least, where to find secret information and useful helping-hands. Before evening, he learned where Justo was concealed; and having provided himself with a couple of resolute companions, started in order to prevail in some way on his old antagonist at backgammon to maintain a complete silence on all he knew of the past.

The commandant was not new to this kind of adventure. Long inaction made him at the outset hesitate to engage in it; but when once he had taken the first step, he felt a strange elasticity of spirits. Tender natures feel young again amidst gentle and amiable scenes; that rough hard man seemed to be relieved of twenty winters, because he was once more engaged in an action that might end in crime. He had learned that Justo would be almost alone; but he had not positively determined what he should do. On the morrow, however, he expected that there would no longer exist any witness likely to interfere with his ambition.

Despite the vague allusions of Jeppo, and the interview that was to be contrived at his suggestion, the position of the commandant was at that time, if not safe, yet tolerable. However much opinion might be turned against him, there were no elements on which distinct accusation could be founded. We have ourselves refrained from saying how far his past life had been guilty, because had he not—by a desire to be perfect in his strange way—blindly laboured to make the truth manifest, his contemporaries might have suspected, but could not have condemned him. The ends of justice are oftener served by the over-ingenuity of criminals, than by the diligence of its instruments.

Justo had become more and more alarmed every day since his departure from Maretimo. Until, however, he learned that the marchese and the commandant—for report, as usual, exaggerated everything—had suddenly become dear friends again, he did not despair of ultimately returning to his little property on the island. Then only did he determine to escape from Sicily altogether. As a relic of old habits, he had always kept the greater part of his wealth in a portable shape, so that exile to him was not ruin. In the first flush of alarm, he had taken refuge among his old comrades, and renewed acquaintance with old haunts. That kind of life, however, soon disgusted him again; and when he learned from Pipò that he was sought for, he would not listen to any reasoning whatever, but firmly refused an interview, and took refuge in a place which was, by common consent among that class of people, looked upon as inviolable.

It was a lonely house, situated about a rood from the sea-beach amongst the hills. They called it an *Albergo*; and, indeed, by day the sailors often went out to drink there—sometimes with their lasses to dance. What made the place safe was, that nothing ever happened there to draw the attention of the police by day. By night, what could induce them to go to that lonely spot, towards which, indeed, suspicion was never directed? It is true that once or twice there was talk of wounded smugglers taking refuge there; but after all, no house had ever a better reputation for tranquillity than the *Albergo del Cane Nero*.

Justo knew from old times the ancient couple that kept the place, and felt perfectly easy in their society. They went to bed, leaving him to meditate in the great chamber on the ground-floor. The proposal of Pipò had annoyed him. Would he repeat it?—or would he take the first refusal as final? A trap was evidently laid for him; the marchese and the commandant wanted to get him into their hands, and had corrupted or wheedled the smuggler. Would it not be best suddenly, without warning to any one, to depart, leaving no trace of the road he took? That was certainly the wisest course. Justo had no baggage. He felt that the girdle containing his money was well secured. The roads were known to him; in ten minutes, he might cut off all connection with his old comrades, and be on the way to a virtuous and honourable life. He rose from his seat, and leaving the lamp burning on the table, softly advanced towards the door and opened it. A figure stood on the

threshold. He stepped back; the figure advanced; it was no other than that of Girolamo di Georgio. Justo retreated as far as he was able.

The commandant most certainly had not formed a definite plan; besides, he knew not who might be present in the house. He had told his companions to keep aloof at first, and determined to feel his way. What he said was very confused: he talked of his friendship for Justo, who forthwith felt his danger, and shewed that he was armed. Their voices gradually rose to a high pitch; no one seemed to hear; there could be no witnesses.

'Old pirate,' accordingly exclaimed the commandant, 'you must not think to escape. Swear that you will never reveal anything you know, or'—

Here he broke off, for he had now in reality no intention of leaving a choice of alternatives; but not daring single-handed to attack Justo, who had retired into a corner with a pistol in his hand, turned to call his accomplices. What was his surprise on beholding Walter, Buck, and Pipó—at whose approach his *bravi* had taken to flight—enter the chamber.

'Gentlemen,' said he, admitting his guilt at once in his confusion and alarm, 'I am your prisoner.'

'You may thank us, poltroon, for your life,' exclaimed Pipó to Justo. 'The two brothers Nani were outside.'

Justo understood at once that if the commandant wished to put him out of the way, there must be others ready to reward him for his secrets; and seeing, also, that it would be difficult to escape, consented to return with Walter and his party to Palermo. Dawn had already whitened the sky when they reached the gates.

CURIOSITIES OF LONDON.*

It is usual to speak of London as a world in itself, not only from its presenting specimens of all the various races of mankind, but from its exhibiting, in its ordinary population, all the gradations of social life, from the darkest barbarism to the most exquisite refinement. To heap into a single volume everything curious and remarkable in this strange microcosm, was surely a great idea; and Mr Timbs has wrought it out with an industry worthy of that unwearied compiler. The appearance of the volume itself brings before you an image of London. It is a number of volumes squeezed together, and rolled into one dense mass; and in its crowded pages you feel as if you were working your passage through the choked thoroughfares of the metropolis. In the frontispiece, however, sits Mr Timbs himself, pen in hand—a plain, stout, sagacious, methodical-looking man—as if for the purpose of guiding and protecting you through the maze.

In order to give an idea of the contents of this volume, we shall just glance along one of the great lines of street on the left of the Thames. Under the head 'Strand,' there occur a number of interesting notices. Beginning on the south side at Northumberland House, we learn that this well-known mansion was built about 1605, for Henry Howard, Earl of Northampton, and passed by marriage into the family of the Percys of Northumberland. It was in this edifice that, in 1660, General Monk met by invitation a number of leading men of the nation, and proposed to them the restoration of Charles II. The house has since been considerably altered. The glory of the interior is the double state-staircase, with a

collection of pictures and objects of taste. Behind, there is a garden or patch of pleasure-ground, with walks and some lofty trees, reminding us of what the Strand must have been when it was skirted with the mansions of nobility, of which Northumberland House is the only surviving memorial. Walking eastwards along the Strand on this side, we have a number of short streets diverging towards the Thames, each celebrated in some way or other. In Northumberland Court, lodged Lord Nelson. In Northumberland Street, Ben Jonson lived with his mother and his stepfather, a bricklayer. At No. 7 Craven Street, now a society's office, resided Dr Benjamin Franklin in 1771. At No. 18 Strand was born, in 1776, the late Mr Mathews, comedian; 'his father was a bookseller, and his shop was the resort of Dr Adam Clarke, Rowland Hill, and other dissenting ministers.' No. 31 occupies part of the site of York House, in which, 1560, was born Lord Chancellor Bacon. Villiers, Duke of Buckingham, at one time inhabited York House; and while residing here, he erected, in 1626, a handsome stone gateway on the Thames, which is still seen from the water. Villiers and Buckingham Streets are named from the duke's connection with the neighbourhood. At the last house on the west side of Buckingham Street, since rebuilt, lived Samuel Pepys from 1684 to 1700. No. 15, on the east side, opposite, was hired for Peter the Great in 1698; the house has some noble rooms facing the river. Next comes the Adelphi, a group of buildings named from four brothers, Adam, who about 1768 erected here a number of handsome streets, founded on vast arches over the courtyard of old Durham House. At the centre house of Adelphi Terrace, facing the Thames, and marked No. 5, died David Garrick, January 20, 1779. In John Street have lived and died many eminent public characters.

Continuing our way along the Strand, we next arrive at the opening, at the bottom of which stand Beaufort Buildings, now occupied for business purposes. Here, at one time, stood a mansion named, from its successive owners, Carlisle, Russel, and Worcester House; the name Beaufort being the dual title of the Marquis of Worcester's eldest son. We are told that 'Lord Clarendon lived here while his house was building at the top of St James Street; and here, in 1660, was married Ann Hyde, the chancellor's daughter, to the Duke of York,' afterwards James II. Passing over traditions about Salisbury and Cecil Streets, and the Savoy, we come to Wellington Street, a modern opening; beyond which, on the site of No. 141, 'lived Jacob Tonson, the bookseller, "at Shakespeare's Head, over against Catherine Street, in the Strand." The house was successively occupied by the publishers Andrew Millar, Alderman Thomas Cadell, and Cadell and Davies. Millar, being a Scotchman, adopted the sign of Buchanan's Head, a painting of which continued in one of the window-panes to our day.' We are getting on classic ground. 'No. 142 occupies the site of the Turk's Head Coffee-house, which Dr Johnson encouraged: "for the mistress of it is a good civil woman, and has not much business."'

Of Somerset House, built by the Protector Somerset about 1547, we need present no particulars, but pass on to less known matters. At the bar of the Strand Hotel, No. 162, letters were left for the author of Junius. Three doors further on, marked 165, we have an instance of English persistency in old arrangements. At this place, as appears, from an old advertisement, Anderson's Scots pills have been sold since 1699; the shop is spoken of as having the sign of the Golden Unicorn, and being situated 'over against the maypole, in the Strand.' Eastward, there formerly stood a large mansion called Arundel House, to which, it is said, the Earl of Arundel brought Old

* *Curiosities of London, Exhibiting the most Rare and Remarkable Objects of Interest in the Metropolis.* By John Timbs, F.S.A. London: David Bogue. 1855. A post-octavo volume of 800 pages, with subjects arranged in alphabetical order.

Parr from Shropshire, to be shewn to Charles I.; and in consequence of high living here, the old man died, November 14, 1625, at the age of 152 years and nine months. Our faith in the tradition of Parr being domesticated in this mansion, is somewhat shaken by a fact recorded by the author in speaking of 405 Strand, to which he says Old Parr was brought from the country. Perhaps he lodged only for a day or two at 405; but Mr Timbs should have sifted the truth of the statement, instead of presenting two apparently conflicting passages. But let us go on. The site of Arundel House is now occupied by Arundel, Surrey, Howard, and Norfolk Streets. At 191 Strand, was the shop of William Godwin, bookseller, author of *Caleb Williams*. Essex Street now occupies the site of the town mansion of the Earl of Essex, the unfortunate favourite of Queen Elizabeth.

At this point, we are opposite the church of St Clements' Danes, near which, on the north side, were formerly some interesting old buildings; the most curious of all, perhaps, being the Angel—an entire specimen, till lately, of the old-fashioned inns. Holywell Street, a great thoroughfare in days of yore, 'is named from one of the holy springs, which Fitz-Stephen described as "sweete, wholesome, and cleere, and much frequented by schollers and youth of the city in summer evenings, when they walk forth to take the aire." The holy-well is stated to be that under the Old Dog Tavern, No. 24.' The church of St Clements' Danes, by no means a handsome, and certainly an inconveniently placed structure, traces a connection with the period when the Danes were in Britain. In the church is buried Otway, the dramatic poet. 'St Clements was the church most frequented by Dr Johnson; here, upon a column adjoining his pew, No. 18, in the north gallery, is a brass tablet, with the following inscription by the Rev. Dr Croly:—"In this pew, and beside this pillar, for many years attended divine service the celebrated Dr Samuel Johnson, the philosopher, the poet, the great lexicographer, the profound moralist, and chief writer of his time. Born, 1709; died, 1784. In the remembrance and honour of noble faculties nobly employed, some inhabitants of the parish of St Clements' Danes have placed this slight memorial, A.D. 1851." The inhabitants have done their parish much honour by this commemoration. We now pass on into Fleet Street, Johnson's favourite locality, of which we may now draw a few amusing particulars from the mine of information before us.

Fleet Street, extending eastwards from Temple Bar to Bridge Street, differs considerably in appearance from the Strand, of which it is a continuation. There is a greater density of buildings; the throng is more dense; and everything has an air of greater antiquity. The Strand is a kind of patch-work of pieces of street erected, from time to time, on the sites of great aristocratic mansions—a stretch of country road filled up as occasion required. Fleet Street, as an integral part of 'the city,' is ancient and homogeneous; tall houses shoulder each other in a business-like way, and at a glance we know we are on a spot which has been covered with buildings since the Heptarchy, if not since the days of the Romans. In old times, as now, Fleet Street was lined with the shops of tradesmen, each possessing a peculiar emblematic sign, and the sidewalks were encumbered with posts, upon which advertisements of goods for sale and announcements of the performances at the theatre were stuck; hence the term *posting-bills*. Among the old trading celebrities of Fleet Street, printing-offices, booksellers' shops, and banking-houses were conspicuous. Here are still some old banking firms. 'No. 1 Fleet Street (formerly the Marygold) is the banking-house of Child & Co., who date from soon after the Restoration; they occupy the rooms over Temple Bar for their books of accounts.' Next is Gosling's Bank, No. 19. William Gosling,

the founder of the house, is mentioned in royal records as far back as 1674. What an idea do these facts give of the substantiality of the old London banking firms! and yet such things are not thought remarkable in England.

The value of ground in Fleet Street has led to the custom of building houses in contiguous narrow lanes; and in these murky passages there have flourished, from time immemorial, a variety of inns, taverns, and coffee-houses, celebrated in the literature of the last two centuries. We can afford space for only a few casual notices. On the south side, down a passage, is the ancient precinct of Whitefriars, the *Alsatia* of Scott's *Fortunes of Nigel*, now sobered into a group of narrow quiet streets, partly occupied by printers. Fronting Fleet Street, in this quarter, but entered by a carriage-way, may be observed the Bolt-in-Tun Inn, which is named in a grant as early as 1443. Think of an inn in London having been in operation since half a century before the discovery of America! Yet the Tabard (No. 75 High Street, Southwark), now stupidly called the Talbot, is older still; for it was from this ancient hostel that Chaucer and his fellow-pilgrims set out on their pilgrimage to Canterbury in 1383. Further eastward, on the same side, is the entry to Salisbury Square, where once stood Salisbury House, the town residence of the bishops of Salisbury. In this quiet little square 'Richardson wrote his *Pamela*, and printed his novels; his printing-office being at the top of the court, now No. 76 Fleet Street. Goldsmith was once Richardson's reader; and here was printed Maitland's *London*, folio, 1739. Richardson was visited here by Hogarth, Johnson, Young, Secker, archbishop of Canterbury, and Mrs Barbauld, when a playful child. Nearly opposite, on the north side of Fleet Street, are found the principal retreats of Johnson—the Mitre, his favourite tavern, excepted. We may run over a few notices as they occur in the book. In Bolt Court—a paved and crooked alley envired by respectable edifices—'at No. 8, Dr Johnson lived from 1776 till his death in 1784. His house was subsequently Bensley's printing-office, and was burnt in 1819. The Johnson's Head Tavern was not contemporary with the doctor. At No. 4, Ferguson the astronomer died 1776.' A neighbouring passage from Fleet Street leads to Wine-office Court. 'Goldsmith lodged here in 1761, when Johnson first visited him. Goldsmith then wrote for the *Public Ledger* newspaper, and began the *Vicar of Wakefield*.' On the right-hand side of the court, as we enter from the street, is 'a good old chop-house, the Cheshire Cheese.' In this memorable establishment, with plain box-seats, and floor sprinkled with saw-dust, are daily dispensed some hundreds of dinners, consisting principally of chops and steaks of matchless tenderness. Dinners are served here in the unsophisticated style of a century or two ago; the world may change, the Cheshire Cheese never. Nor would 'improvement' be tolerated; the customers would not relish finery. When lately visiting the Cheshire, an aged gentleman was pointed out who had dined here at the same hour every day, always occupying the same spot, for the last forty years. Where, but in England, could we hear of such affection for old haunts? We may next notice Johnson's Court. Here, at No. 7, Johnson lived from 1765 to 1776. 'Northward is Gough Square, where, at No. 17, Johnson compiled the greater portion of his Dictionary, 1748 to 1758.' Mitre Court—south side of the street—is rendered famous by the Mitre Tavern, 'the favourite rendezvous of Dr Johnson's evening-parties, including Goldsmith, Percy, Hawke, Boswell; here was planned the tour to the Hebrides. Johnson had a strange nervous feeling, which made him uneasy if he had not touched every post between the Mitre and his own lodgings. Chamberlain Clarke, who died in 1831, aged ninety-two, was the last surviving of Dr Johnson's Mitre friends.'

Shire Lane, adjoining Temple Bar, was once a place of note. 'At the upper end of the lane lived Isaac Bickerstaff, the *Tatler*, who led the deputation of "Twaddlers" down the lane, across Fleet Street, to Duke's Coffee-house. At the Trumpet—afterwards the Duke's Head—public-house, in Shire Lane, the *Tatler* met his club; and in the lane lived Christopher Katt, at whose house originated the Kit-kat Club.'

If the reader be not tired of these sauntering observations, we may proceed eastward to Ludgate Hill and Street, which bring us to St Paul's Churchyard. Ludgate—so named from a gateway, removed 1760—has long been famous for mercers' shops, but also celebrated in the annals of children's books. At the north-east corner—St Paul's Churchyard—No. 65, lived John Newbery, for whom Goldsmith wrote *Goody Two Shoes*, a pamphlet on *The Cock Lane Ghost*, and a *History of England*, and edited the *Public Ledger* newspaper. To Newbery succeeded John Harris, and next Grant and Griffith. 'Through Ludgate Hill and Street, there have,' says our authority, 'passed in twelve hours 8752 vehicles, 13,025 horses, and 105,352 persons.'

By Ave-Maria Lane, and some less obvious passages northward, we are conducted from this vast thoroughfare to the comparative quietude of Paternoster Row, which, with the exception of a few modernised buildings, remains pretty much what it was hundreds of years ago. So narrow is the Row, that only at certain places, by limiting the breadth of foot-pavement, can two vehicles pass each other. Old residents in the Row, however, do not complain of either its dinginess or want of free air. They count greatly on its standing on the highest ground in London, and with some pride refer to an inscription to that effect in Pannier Alley, a short lane which connects the Row with Newgate Street. 'This alley is named from having been the standing-place of bakers' boys with their panniers, when bread was sold in markets.' Built into the wall, about the middle of the alley, is a stone on which is carved the figure of a boy sitting on a pannier, with the inscription: 'When ye have sought the city round, yet still this is the highest ground.—Aug. 27, 1688.' Mr Timbs fails to enlighten us respecting this wonderful elevation. We should imagine it cannot be more than thirty-six feet above the high water-level of the Thames, for the Mansion House is only thirty-two. The history of Paternoster Row is traced to early times; at least to the reign of Henry IV., when 'stationers and text-writers here wrote and sold A B C, with the Pater Noster, Ave, Creed, Graces, &c.' Two hundred years ago, it was considerably occupied by 'mercers, silk-men, and lace-men.' Defoe, we think, refers to its chairmakers; but in all stages of its career, it seems to have borne a semi-ecclesiastical and literary reputation. About Stationers' Court, Ave-Maria Lane, and Amen Corner, all at the western extremity, and also along its south side, there have long existed some large publishing and bookselling concerns. 'We find, as early as 1564, that Henry Denham, bookseller, lived at the "Star," in Paternoster Row. In the reign of Queen Anne, the booksellers removed here from Little Britain.' So far as we can learn, the two oldest publishing-houses in the Row are those of Messrs Longmans and of Mr Baldwin—the fathers, indeed, of the 'trade.' Mr Timbs states, that 'at No. 39 have lived more than a century and a quarter the Longmans; the imprint of Thomas Longman, with Thomas and John Osborne, at the sign of "the Ship and Black Swan," is dated 1726. Here was commenced the original Cyclopaedia, by Ephraim Chambers, upon which was based the New Cyclopaedia of Dr Rees. For several years, the firm gave here dinners and soirées to authors and artists; and they have acquired world-wide repute as the publishers of the works of Scott, Mackintosh, Southey,

Sydney Smith, Moore, and Macaulay. Messrs Longmans' own sale of books has amounted to 5,000,000 volumes in the year.' Our author also mentions, that 'at No. 47 lived Robert Baldwin, publisher of the *London Magazine*, commenced 1732.' We have reason, however, to believe that the house of Baldwin can be traced as far back as the Revolution of 1688, the first of the name having been Richard Baldwin, a bookseller in St Paul's Churchyard, who died in 1727, and was succeeded by his nephew Robert, who settled in Paternoster Row. The sign of the house was the 'Rose.' From father to son, or uncle to nephew, the business has continued to our own day. The much-respected Mr Robert Baldwin, last surviving member of this ancient firm, after being fifty years the occupant of No. 47, has just quitted it, and the premises have passed into the possession of W. and R. Chambers, publishers of the present sheet. In the dwelling-house connected with No. 47, Mr Baldwin frequently entertained Charles Lamb, and other distinguished literary personages. Three doors eastward, at No. 50, was the Chapter Coffee House, now temporarily occupied by a bookselling concern. The Chapter is mentioned in No. 1 of the *Connoisseur*, January 31, 1754, as the resort of 'those encouragers of literature, and not the worst judges of merit, the booksellers.' Here, in a box in the north-east corner, called the *Witenagemot*, usually met the 'Wet Paper Club,' composed of authors, editors of newspapers, and some of the adjacent bibliopoles, among whom was Robinson, styled the 'King of the Booksellers.' The Robinsons established themselves in the Row in 1763, and here they published their *Annual Register*. Among other by-gone publishers in the Row, were 'Harrison, Cooke, and the Hoggs; to the latter succeeded their shopman, Thomas Kelly, Alderman of Farringdon-Within, and Lord Mayor, 1836-7.' Cooke's pocket editions, issued at No. 17, have never been rivalled in beauty. 'At "The Bible and Crown," a sign carved in wood, coloured, and gilt, lived the Rivingtons, High-church publishers, from 1710 to 1853. Here, in 1791, the Rivingtons commenced the *British Critic*; but the "old shop," where Horsley and Tomline, Warburton and Hurd, used to meet, was in 1854 altered to a "shawl emporium." On the same side, at a short distance, is a large stone building, occupied as a dépôt by the Religious Tract Society—an association professedly established to issue brief tracts, but which has latterly seen fit to devote a portion of its funds to the issuing of books apparently differing in no respect from those which are the objects of private enterprise. Notwithstanding the establishment of publishers elsewhere in the metropolis, it would seem as if Paternoster Row was not losing its *prestige* as a great central mart of literature. Besides many publishing-houses of lesser or greater importance, there are within its precincts (Ave-Maria Lane and Stationers' Court) two of the greatest book commission-houses in the world—namely, those of Messrs Whittaker, and Messrs Simpkin and Marshall; the amount of periodicals and miscellaneous works dispersed by them respectively being immense.

Having outrun all reasonable bounds in our notice of the work of Mr Timbs, we in the meanwhile drop the subject, commending the *Curiosities of London* to all who have any wish to search into as amusing a mine of information as has for several years been presented to the public. If the work has any faults, it is that of containing too much, besides presenting a variety of details requiring verification. For example, who cares where Ireland, the author of the Shakespeare forgeries, lived? And Mr Timbs states, that Scotland Yard is so named from having been 'the site of the palace, "for receipt of the Kings of Scotland, when they came to the Parliament of England."' Before incorporating so strange an assertion,

on the authority of Stowe or some other old chronicler, the author should have reflected that Scotland has always been an independent nation—a short period of oppression under the Edwards excepted—and that its kings, having a parliament of their own to look after, were not likely, either from duty or affection, to attend the parliaments of England.

CURIOUS ELECTRICAL PHENOMENA.

WHAT would be thought of a lady who, when saluting her dearest friends, gave at the same time an electric shock from her lips?—who, presenting a hand to her acquaintances, made *their* hands tingle again with electric sparks? What would you think if the knob of your friend's parlour door sent a mortal twinge up your arm? or if a similar twinge paralysed your legs on passing from the front to the back drawing-room? No matter what you would think: such things are, and the marvels of fiction fade to insignificance before them.

New York, as every one knows, is an extraordinary city, famous for many things, but of which we concern ourselves at present only with some of the newest private dwelling-houses—edifices of almost palatial architecture. Great pains are bestowed on the workmanship of the interior, the doors and windows being made to fit with the utmost accuracy, to keep out the fierce winter cold; and the arrangements for heating the apartments with hot air are such, that the houses are as dry and warm as an oven during the cold season. Too warm, indeed, for health.

Well, within the past few years, the occupants of some of these houses have been the subjects and witnesses of unusual phenomena, something more than they bargained for in their lease. They have had to endure the visitation, if not domiciliation, of what may be called domestic electricity, exhibiting itself in vivid sparks, without apparent cause or warning. As described by Professor Loomis of New York university, the shocks were at times of considerable intensity. 'A stranger,' he says, 'on entering one of these electrical houses, in attempting to shake hands with the inmates, receives a shock, which is quite noticeable and somewhat unpleasant. Ladies in attempting to kiss each other are saluted by a spark. A spark is perceived whenever the hand is brought near to the knob of a door, the gilded frame of a mirror, the gas-pipes, or any metallic body, especially when this body communicates freely with the earth. In one house, which I have had an opportunity to examine, a child, in taking hold of the knob of a door, received so severe a shock that he ran off in great fright. The lady of the house in approaching the speaking-tube to give orders to the servants, felt a very unpleasant shock in the mouth, and was much annoyed by the electricity, until she learned first to touch the tube with her finger. In passing from one parlour to the other, if she chanced to step upon the brass-plate which served as a slide for the folding-doors, she caught an unpleasant shock in the foot. When her finger approached the chandelier, or gaselier rather, suspended from the ceiling, there appeared a brilliant spark and a snap, as in the discharge of a Leyden jar of good size. In many houses the phenomena have been so remarkable as to occasion general surprise and almost alarm.'

Strange as these facts appear, they are not difficult of explanation. They are most conspicuous in the coldest

weather, and in the best finished and most highly heated houses. Here are presented materials for the development of electricity; in addition to which, the floors of the rooms are covered with velvet-pile carpets; and it admits of proof that electricity may be excited in a close thick worsted carpet by the leather of the shoe in walking over it. Two plies of ordinary carpet, or of drugget, exhibit the same effect, but with less intensity. Dryness is essential to the phenomenon, and the American winters, as is well known, are remarkably dry; at any rate, the anthracite coal-furnace, pouring its stream of hot air into every room of a house, effectually checks any approach to moisture. For this reason, to shuffle across the carpet in such a house, or even to walk slowly, would so charge a person with electricity, that sparks would be given off by touching another person or any metallic substance. And although the cause may seem scarcely adequate to the effect, we ought to remember that the friction is accompanied by the whole weight of the body. Let any one rub a piece of carpet with a piece of leather, and apply the electrometer; the effect will be surprising. These electrical houses give feebler signs of electricity as warm weather comes on; and during the summer, with its damp oppressive heat, they almost entirely disappear.

There is nothing mysterious in this. The phenomenon is easily understood; but it has the peculiarity—reversing social usages—of staying most at home in dry weather, and going abroad when damp and rainy. We have read of a natural philosopher, who, persecuted by an obstinate dun, charged his knocker with a strong shock to punish his tormentor: the hapless savant should have lived in an electrical house. We have heard of other houses where a spark could always be drawn from the looking-glass frame above the mantle-piece, a fire burning at the time in an open grate beneath. And in many parts of America, and on board steam-boats, persons sitting round the fire have drawn electric sparks by presenting their knuckles to the stove. It is known, too, that a sheet of paper laid on a warm stove and rubbed will give out a spark.

In 1837, the scientific journals published a few remarkable particulars concerning an 'electrical lady' at Orford, in New Hampshire. This lady, one day towards the end of January, during an appearance of the aurora, happening to pass her hand near her brother's face, saw sparks fly from each finger; the pricking sensation being felt by both, to their mutual astonishment. A professor from Dartmouth College, who came in shortly afterwards, expressed his incredulity, when the lady, presenting her knuckle to his nose, he was convinced of the fact by a spark three-fourths of an inch long. This electrical condition remained in full vigour up to the end of February, after which it decreased, and was lost in May; but during this time, the lady observed the effect to be greatest when her mind was tranquil and cheerful, and least when she was agitated or cold. She had no inward consciousness of the presence or absence of the electric power; when it existed in intensity, while sitting at her needle-work, she was tormented by the sparks every time she touched her scissors, knitting-needles, the poker, or anything metallic; and when quietly reading near the stove, three or four sparks a minute would pass from her to the mass of iron. Her health was delicate; and she continued subject to similar manifestations till her death, which happened a few years after.

Turning from domestic to industrial life, we meet with another mode of electrical development. The proprietor of a cotton-factory at Manlius, in the state of New York, observed that, when his machinery was in motion, and the drums with leathern straps making nearly 300 revolutions a minute, all the loose cotton-fibres within a short distance of the strap were attracted

towards it, stretching out in quick agitation, as though being tugged from their attachments. If any of the work-people passed under the strap, although their heads were four feet from it, their hair would be drawn straight up, 'like quills upon the fretful porcupine.' Fibres of cotton held near would fly to the strap, and sometimes come and go repeatedly from it to the hand; the effect being most marked when the strap was tightened, and the friction therefore greatest. Here, though the nature of the climate had an influence in producing the phenomenon, the fact that leather is a good exciter of electricity is likewise of importance. Franklin once said, that with a leather cylinder, it would be easy to make a portable electrical-machine. But still greater excitement has been witnessed in another factory, near the sea-shore, in the state of Maine, where the atmosphere is generally damp; although this phenomenon is most observable in clear weather. The strap, in this case, when in motion would give off a spark to the knuckle at 17 inches' distance, to the finger 3 feet distant, and an electrical brush to a black-lead pencil at 4 feet, while a steel-point at 7 feet became luminous. The work, indeed, could not be carried on, for the loose, light 'rovings' were actually attracted from their place; nor was it till the machinery was connected by a wire to an iron steam-pipe that the inconvenience ceased. A strip of leather, held near the swiftly-moving belt, drew out jets and flashes resembling an aurora in miniature.

Similar phenomena have been observed in factories in this country. In 1838, the vicar of Keighley, in Yorkshire, sent an account to Mr Faraday, of singular electrical effects in a worsted-mill in that town. Here also was a leathern strap, passing over two drums, and crossed midway, so as to resemble the figure ∞ , and it was at the point of crossing that the effects were exhibited. Presenting the knuckles, numerous brilliant brushes of electric light streamed off: a prime conductor drew sparks two inches in length; a large Leyden jar could be charged in a few seconds, and at any time, for the electricity was constant. 'In fact,' said the writer to the learned professor, in concluding his statement, 'if this strap had the advantage of silk flaps and a little amalgam, it would rival the machine in the lecture-room in Albemarle Street.'

Another instance was observed at Glasgow, three or four years ago, in an engineering-factory. The floors of the building are of asphalt, laid on arches of corrugated iron, supported by iron columns. Some time after the machinery had been set agoing, the work-people found themselves troubled by shocks of electricity, and in one room so severe, that measures had to be taken to divert the excitement, by wires leading to the iron columns.

In this room was fixed a large cast-iron lathe, and a comprehensive apparatus for turning, worked by leathern bands. A shock could be taken at any time when the machinery was in motion, by detaching the wire, and touching the iron of the lathe with one hand and the column with the other; and on holding the end of the wire at a quarter of an inch from the column, a stream of sparks passed from one to the other. Held nearer, the light was constant. An electro-magnet, placed in the current, acquired great intensity, and an effect was produced on the needle of the multiplier and the compass-needle. Tested by the electrometer, the electricity was found to be positive; and so great was the excitement, that at two feet from the belt nearly the whole of one of the gold leaves was torn away, and remained adherent to the side of the jar for some hours. Gutta-percha bands, we may add, do not develop electricity.

These phenomena, while remarkable in themselves, open views of electricity which the natural philosopher will some day make subservient to his purpose.

There are undiscovered powers in this subtle element more wonderful than anything the world has yet dreamed of, and all facts are valuable that tend to their elucidation.

WICKED WATTS.

DURING seven or eight years of childhood, I was placed under the care of a spinster aunt, who resided on the outskirts of the metropolis, in a large dilapidated house, of which our little household inhabited a very small portion, consisting, as it did, of my aunt, her two old domestics, and my poor little self. These years, notwithstanding a great distance of time, are forcibly engraven on my memory; they stand out, as it were, from all other associations, reminiscences, or recollections. My parents were abroad, toiling to achieve honourable independence, and my brother and sister were taken care of by relatives in the sister-country: so that I was quite alone; and though not actively unhappy with Aunt Stedman, yet mine was a dreary kind of existence on the whole for a once fondled, petted child. The greater part of my aunt's time was passed in reading and writing. I think she was composing a poem in the style of Hudibras: she could not bear to be disturbed, rarely went out, and did not care to linger over her meals; in short, she was a most unattractive person in my eyes; and though she never scolded or reproved me, her carelessness of my comfort and amusement was not likely to induce affection. The two servants were a man and his wife, named James and Nanny; they had lived in Miss Stedman's service a score of years, and apparently had an easy place of it, taking things much their own way. The rooms which were inhabited were all at the back of the house, save one, where my aunt always sat at her desk in a comfortable angle between the windows and the fireplace. These windows looked towards the high-road, which in those days was traversed from morning to night, and from night to morning, as a direct continental route, or main outlet from the metropolis. Established in one of the deep embrasures here, I was permitted to look out on the passers-by, though not to make a movement or hazard a remark; and as it was a far more cheerful apartment than any of the back ones, and as the numerous rooms on the same floor were all empty or shut up, I greatly preferred remaining in Miss Stedman's presence, solaced by the company of a huge doll, to being obliged to seek solitude, or else to herd with James and Nanny.

The house, as I have said, was a large one, but falling into decay: it was my aunt's own property, and in ancient times had no doubt been a fine place, though rather too closely bordering on the public road. Its value, however, in point of situation must have become sadly depreciated, when by degrees the neighbouring mansions were pulled down, and hosts of tenements rose in their place, of such a size and character as to render the vicinity anything but pleasant or respectable. Immediately opposite, was a row of small houses, called Puddiman's Buildings. These were gray with age, but infants in comparison with my aunt's stately overshadowing roof. Even Nanny did not know what had stood there before the erection of Puddiman's Buildings, but she thought it must have been open garden-ground. Miss Stedman did not notice the outer world, nor concern herself

to remark the close proximity of neighbours, whose noises never disturbed her in the street below, for she was used to them, and they had grown with her growth; although had I but addressed a word to her, or my dumb wax companion, a hasty command to 'leave the room' would have ensued forthwith. These circumstances threw me very much on my own resources for occupation and thought. Seated on the window-sill, with a book in hand, which was not always read, I gradually became quite intimately acquainted with all the occupants of the opposite houses, and a world of interest was centered in Puddiman's Buildings, which I looked down on, and into, from the elevation of my retreat, as from a tower. So I used childishly to indulge my fancy, and silently talk to myself and my doll about all that was going on below. I was rather too much advanced in years to seek companionship in a puppet; but what could I do? With keen observation, and no lack of imagination to fill up any gaps, it was left entirely to my own discretion whether I should imbibe low habits with James and Nanny in the kitchen, and cast childhood in some measure behind me, or continue a child, and silently fondle a toy, and listlessly idle away time in looking out of the window. I chose the latter; and it was the wiser alternative. Standing out in strong relief against a clear sky, I still view in my mind's-eye the dingy tumble-down row of houses which have long since been swept away from the face of the earth, together with Miss Stedman's ancient mansion, to make room for gay shops and a noble railway terminus.

There were five distinct tenements comprised under the name of Puddiman's Buildings, three of which did not boast of a story above the ground-floor, and all were irregularly built, without minding any particular style of architecture. First, there was a green-grocer's, where oysters were also sold—and very large oysters they were; the green-grocer's wife was a fiery-faced, stout woman, but industrious and sober—very unlike her intemperate husband, who seemed to occasion his helpmeet a vast deal of trouble by his addiction to 'the drop'; who was intemperate, however, only as to drink, sitting quietly and stupidly beside his door, pipe in mouth, contemplating with lacklustre eyes the passers-by. This couple had two sons, brick-layer's labourers, who regularly returned home after work-hours; and two lodgers, apparently engaged in a similar calling—for the green-grocer's house had a room over the shop, much resembling an enlarged watch-box, and ascended within by a ladder. This constituted it a two-storied dwelling, and the watch-box was the dormitory of the green-grocer and his fiery-faced wife. It had a queer little window with four panes of glass—only one of which was stuffed with rags—and a check-muslin curtain drawn across. I discovered that they were fond of red-herrings for supper, which I often marvelled at, when oysters with them seemed so much more plentiful. When the shop-door was open, I could see into their back-room, by flattening my nose against the window-panes of my observatory; and many a time, by the ruddy firelight, I have envied them their cheerful hot supper, and a tear has trickled down my cheek as I watched the fiery-faced matron loading her sons' platters with steaming potatoes, and saying—for I always fancied what they said—'Come, my dears, eat while it is hot; and much good may it do you.' Alas! I had no kind mother near to press food on me, but, superfluous and chilled, I slunk off to bed, in a big cold desolate chamber, to dream of warmth, and red-herrings, and potatoes, and, above all,

of kind words. I quite loved that green-grocer's wife; I felt sure she was a benevolent excellent creature, despite her fiery face and dirty hands and arms; and I would not have scrupled to ask her a favour, had I stood in need of any particular aid.

Next to the green-grocer's was a long, low, barn-like hut, into which you descended by two steps, protected by broken palings; it was all one room, with an uneven tiled floor; and here lived poor old Dame Simpkinson, bedridden, in one corner, but still presiding over the sale of gingerbread and sugar-plums, which adorned, and certainly must have darkened, the single window. The door of Dame Simpkinson's house always stood invitingly open, and many children went in to change their half-pence for sweet-cakes during the day; for the dame's wares were celebrated for their genuine manufacture, and the little folks knew very well how much they ought to take for a half-penny or a farthing; and no one, not even Wicked Watts's children, ever dreamed of cheating poor old bedridden Mistress Simpkinson, whom all the neighbours 'did for' in turn, and yet who managed her own buying and selling so cleverly. Then came the dealer in 'marine stores,' even Wicked Watts himself—but of him more presently; his abode had a narrow frontage, but went far back, and its recesses were dark and mysterious. Adjoining to the marine store, a queer, little, rickety, bay-windowed, one-storied house looked more respectable than its neighbours; there was an air of pretension about it: it had but two rooms, one above and one below; but there was a knocker to the door, and a scraper, and two geraniums flourished in the window below, and a white fringe festooned that above. Between the geraniums, a dirty straw-bonnet or two peeped out, and an announcement, written on a card, that here they were 'cleaned.' 'Day School' was also announced in legible characters, superintended by Mrs Sedley and her two daughters; these gaunt women—for all three looked equally old and repulsive—were the aristocrats of Puddiman's Buildings, known to have seen better days, and to demand much outward respect. Their door was always shut; the scholars were taught to knock gently for admission; and the Misses Sedley had a silk cloak between them, which they wore by turns when accompanying their venerable parent to chapel on a Sunday. The silk cloak and the knocker established their claims to consideration; and they were quite affable and condescending to poor Mrs Simpkinson, but distant with the green-grocer's bluff wife, who could not tolerate 'the air of those Sedleys, no how.'

Next to Mrs Sedley was a corner-shop, always changing owners. When these went, or how they came, I never could find out; but 'wonderful bargains' and 'great sacrifices' were always going forward here; and tickets, a foot long, with 'three-farthings' stuck in a corner, invisible to the naked eye, flaunted on coarse flannels and gay prints, while a box of common ribbons, and trumpery of the like kind, completed the small assortment of haberdashery. 'The shop' was at one side of a narrow doorway; on the opposite side, the occupants cooked, washed, slept, and ate, and came forth in tawdry finery to attract customers to throw away hard-earned money on deceptive rubbish. I quite hated that miserable little shop—the people who succeeded each other in keeping it, had all such rascally countenances and cringing manners. I never saw the green-grocer's wife enter it, though the Misses Sedley did, and often stopped to chat with the lady who presided; and once, I know, they invited a young couple to tea; but the young couple, after a six months' struggle and a tremendous 'sacrifice,' suddenly disappeared.

But the marine store and its owner threw all others in the shade. Wicked Watts dwelt in the centre of Puddiman's Buildings; and to him, and to his doings,

all eyes were directed, as to a general point of attraction. When I first resided with Aunt Stedman, and first began to make my silent observations on the scene which opened to my bewildered gaze, it was with absolute terror I watched the countenance and movements of the man known as Wicked Watts. He seemed to my childish imagination the very impersonation of the Evil One issuing from a dark, unfathomable den—so ferocious, so dreadful was the appearance of the dealer in marine stores. He was a widower, with several children of all ages; and when Nanny told me that he had killed three wives by cruel treatment, 'though he could not be hanged for it,' my indignation knew no bounds. The children were the offspring of these three victims, and Wicked Watts used to beat the elder ones, and Nanny said he would surely kill them as he had killed his wives. Two of these unfortunate children had very sweet voices, and sang ballads about the streets, bringing all the pence home to their tyrant, who cruelly ill-used them if they did not bring what he considered enough. As to the younger children, they rolled about in the mud all day long, and tumbled over each other, like a frightened flock, at the bare sound of their father's voice: the youngest was still almost an infant, its unfortunate mother having died after a premature confinement, brought on by the savage treatment of her husband. Wicked Watts did not drink or brawl—he was a Blue Beard only in his own castle, and as frightful a personation of one as it is possible to imagine; so much so, that I often wondered how he could have succeeded in decoying silly women into matrimony. And great was my surprise when a new Mrs Watts suddenly appeared on the scene, 'for the sole purpose,' Nanny declared, 'of being knocked down and trampled to her grave,' like her predecessors.

But a strange and evident change speedily followed the advent of the fourth wife. She was a very fair, good-looking woman, slender, and tall; but with such a voice, such a tongue, such lungs! Wicked Watts vainly endeavoured to bear up against the storm; he made battle furiously: but the virago was too much for even him; and after several futile attempts to establish his old dominion, Wicked Watts drooped his head, and suffered himself to be led about like a tame bear. His children soon benefited by the change, and were reclaimed from destitution and filth as if by magic. The woman's tongue, however, never ceased—morning, noon, and night, it was to be heard scolding, commanding, abusing, ranting, never still. Even the superintendence of the marine store was forcibly claimed by Mrs Watts. She threatened anything and everything terrible to all who interfered with her management. She seemed as if her eyes were in one place, her hands in another, and her tongue everywhere. Wicked Watts got no rest; she made him work, and starved him if he did not: indeed, I began to pity the poor wretch, he looked so utterly miserable and woebegone, so crest-fallen and stupefied, at everything he saw and heard. Mrs Simpkinson complained of the hubbub; but the little Wattses, who had never hitherto owned a farthing of their own, now entered her domain in clean jackets, and asked for lollipop, paying for it too! Their 'new mammy treated them,' they said, 'when they were good;' so Mrs Simpkinson forgave the clamour, and held many sage discourses with the green-grocer's wife, how all this reform had been brought to pass. It was rumoured that Wicked Watts had cast glances on Miss Jemima Sedley when he was a widower for the third time; but that was too aspiring, and the Sedleys looked down with high disdain on the marine store-dealer. They even refused to receive his children as pupils, until the fourth Mrs Watts boldly called upon them, with her clean-faced little ones beside her, and placing herself, with arms a-kimbo, at once on a footing of equality, demanded to

know 'their terms,' with such 'an air,' old Mrs Sedley said, 'there was no refusing.'

Things had been going on in this way for a year or two; Mrs Watts's voice grew more shrill, and her husband appeared with a deep cut across his cheek—which, it was reported, had not been caused by accident, but by the enraged fourth wife, on his venturing to chastise one of his own children—when one evening, just as it grew dusk, and I was watching the proceedings with considerable interest at the green-grocer's, where supper was preparing, a travelling-chariot of foreign build, drawn by four horses, suddenly came to a stand-still between the marine store and Mrs Simpkinson's gingerbread-depôt. The cause of this delay was the plunging of both wheelers, and the fall of one, when a scene of confusion of course ensued; the servants behind jumped down in a moment, and opened the carriage-door, when an elderly lady alighted, assisted by a young gentleman, on whose arm she continued to lean. The accident was soon rectified; Wicked Watts brought lights, and gave assistance; and the lady with some difficulty—for she was scarcely able to use her feet—at length sank down on her easy cushions again; the young man jumped in after her; and the post-boys rattled off, and were out of sight and hearing in a moment *en route* for the continent. But in the meantime, with straining eyes, for it all passed like a dream—I could scarcely credit what I saw, but I *did* see it, I was sure of that—I beheld something glitter on the ground, close to the young gentleman's feet, as he was assisting the fat bustling lady into her chariot again. He had drawn off his gloves, and such lily-white hands were raised to smooth a pair of large whiskers and dark moustaches, that I could scarce refrain from an exclamation of 'How beautiful!' On his little-finger glistened brilliant gems, and one of these rings fell off, no doubt; for Wicked Watts saw it too, and unseen by any living creature, as he thought, with the quickness of lightning picked it up, and put it in his bosom as the travellers drove off. Two of the children were holding lights, and Mrs Watts, in her anxiety to be foremost to receive the liberal donation tendered for their assistance, did not observe what passed. But the road was narrow; Aunt Stedman dozed beside the fire; there was no light from within our room to betray my close proximity to those without; and I clearly saw the glittering thing on the ground, and the suspicious glance of Wicked Watts towards his wife when he stooped to seize the prize.

A feeling of timidity towards Aunt Stedman, and of reserve or pride when in contact with her servants, withheld me from confidential remarks. I frequently overheard James and Nanny converse about the affairs of the neighbourhood, and from their conversation I had gleaned much of my information respecting the inhabitants of Puddiman's Buildings. But being naturally of a shy, retiring disposition, I did not feel inclined to acquaint them with all the thoughts passing through my mind; and, truth to tell, I felt rather ashamed of the interest I secretly cherished in all the daily doings of our opposite neighbours. Wicked Watts I regarded with a species of awe—as a veritable Blue Beard—and I would not have betrayed his secret for worlds; for who could tell what such a villain's revenge might be? No; I alone knew he had picked up a brilliant ring, and I satisfied my conscience by the knowledge that he had not stolen it intentionally. But what would he do with it? How dispose of such a treasure unknown to his violent partner, who never permitted him to have a penny-piece of his own? If he sold it, or pawned it, she would rifle his pockets of the gold; and as to frequenting a public-house, that he dared not do—she would have been after him in a twinkling!

For several nights I tossed about on an uneasy pillow, thinking of the secret I shared with Wicked

Watts, and had almost determined to confide in Aunt Stedman; for several days also I had missed the dealer in marine stores from his accustomed place by his doorway, where he usually sat since his fourth marriage, furnishing up bits of iron, rusty keys and locks, and other odds and ends—looking sheepish and askance whenever he heard his wife's tongue—who not unfrequently, in passing to and fro, gave her lord and master a gentle hint to be 'alive there.' But when I heard James tell Nanny that Wicked Watts had gone nobody knew where, and that his wife knew nothing about him, I began to think it more prudent to keep the secret than to reveal it. Whether this childish reasoning was right or wrong, does not seem quite clear. The neighbours unanimously declared that Wicked Watts had been spirited away on account of his former evil course, and his wife did not contradict them. One or two, indeed, hinted that he had drowned himself in a fit of despondency, which he had been often subject to of late; but the virago scowled so fiercely at the idea, that none dared to repeat it. What could have become of him? He had not robbed his till or his store, and he had not wherewithal to purchase a loaf! Weeks passed, and the disappearance of Wicked Watts in so sudden and mysterious a manner began to be noised abroad; judicial inquiries were instituted, but Mrs Watts was acquitted of all blame or connivance in the affair. She deposed, that about half an hour after the grand foreign folks had alighted at their door, Watts went out without saying a word, and never returned. 'He seemed skeerie like,' she added, 'after that foreign gemman's coal-black eyes had shone upon him. I ain't sure that it warn't a warning to Watts for the bad life he'd led, and I be sommat afeard that the shiners given me may turn to ashes as I hold 'em in my hand.' From that time forth all shook their heads, and spoke in whispers when alluding to the disappearance of Wicked Watts; James and Nanny, too, looked mysterious and solemn, and did not like to go into the empty rooms after dusk. The marine store, however, prospered under the superintendence of Mrs Watts, and the children thrived, but their father never was heard of again; and even Aunt Stedman exhibited some interest when the matter was discussed in her presence. 'No doubt the man had some private means unknown to his wife,' she remarked, 'and has availed himself of them to join a band of Irish emigrants. He's a riddance to the neighbourhood; and would have killed his fourth wife, if she hadn't half-killed him.'

Long afterwards, Nanny informed me, that for many years after these circumstances occurred the memory of Wicked Watts still continued fresh in the minds of the old inhabitants of Puddiman's Buildings, and the legend of 'his call' became quite a winter fireside favourite theme. Mrs Watts had gradually become a milder and more serious person, setting a good example to her step-children, and always speaking of herself as a widow. Then, and then only, at that vast distance of time, I ventured to tell Nanny what I had seen; but she replied with considerable tartness: 'Found a brilliant ring, ma'am, did you say? Pooh, pooh! your eyes were not good enough to see that across the road; that foreign gentleman with the dreadful black whiskers and eyes was no stranger to Wicked Watts, depend on't, and he came only to claim his own.' 'Then, who was the stout elderly lady in his company, Nanny?' I asked with a smile. 'She was a sham, ma'am, in course; and the horses, and the chariot, and the servants were all a sham, to make "the call" look real-like to the neighbours,' replied Nanny solemnly. 'It makes me shiver when I think of it—that it does; and depend on it, ma'am, if you had looked round the corner of the road after that foreign chariot, you'd have seen it all vanish away like smoke.' This legend of

Puddiman's Buildings survived the place itself; for it is still current in the neighbourhood, although the marine store, the green-grocery, the day-school, the lollipop-shop, the haberdashery, and Aunt Stedman's house itself, have all vanished from the face of the earth.

THE DEMON-ORACLE OF CEYLON.

THE Singhalese inhabitants of Ceylon profess the Buddhist religion. As this, however, is too cold a faith to exercise much influence on any people, they have added to it a multitude of superstitions, the greater part of which has been borrowed from the natives of India. Of these, one of the most interesting is that of the demon-oracle, or *dehwhahle*. The affair is not carried to such an extent as about Bombay, yet it exercises a constant sway over the people. The belief on which it is based is simply this—that demons, some good and some bad, generally the spirits of long-departed kings, enter temporarily the bodies of men, and thence utter oracular responses. At each village, therefore, there is a demon-temple, or *dehwhahle*. On Wednesday, the people assemble there; the prophet, called *kapoorahle*, puts on the dress and ornaments of the god he is about to invoke; dances wildly to the sound of stormy music, amidst the burning of fragrant gums; gives oracular answers to the questions put to him; and at last falls into a deep swoon. There can be no doubt that the prophets themselves are sometimes enthusiasts rather than deceivers. A friend of mine saw such an one quake and grow pale, when asked to put on the dress in order that he might be sketched; in fact, he would only put on the various articles of costume successively, saying that if he wore all at once, the god would punish him for doing so at any time except during the regular ceremonial.

The following is an account of a visit paid to the *dehwhahle* of a very small village; it is extracted from a private journal:—This being Wednesday, there was of course a meeting at the *dehwhahle*. Looked in during the forenoon; the *kapoorahle* was standing inside, the door being open. His long dishevelled hair hung down his back; the head had a constant jerking motion from side to side. At short intervals, he uttered convulsive shrieks and sobs, or, looking upwards, hissed out the sound 'Hush! hush!' in a very peculiar tone: this evidently was a call to the spirit. After a time, the bangles (bracelets) of the goddess were placed on his wrists; he then began to shake his hands violently, and to yell, and after a little while turned round. I observed that his face and arms were daubed here and there with turmeric, and that his eyeballs were turned upwards, so that the pupils were invisible. His first query was:

'Why has the raja [myself] come?'

'To see you,' replied the headman of the village.

'That is well.' After that he—or, as the natives would say, the goddess through him—talked a good deal about the said raja. At last a man, carrying a sick child, stepped forward, and mentioned the disease under which it was labouring.

'I will cure it!' was uttered, and papa went off contented. Some other sick persons appeared, and received similar comfort.

The more important ceremony, however, was to come off in the evening; and as I had signified my intention to be present, the villagers arranged everything as comfortably as they could. Till ten or eleven o'clock, there was drizzling rain; and soon after, the hurly-burly began. On reaching the spot, I found six or eight musicians with drums, tam-tams, and cymbals. They kept time admirably; and to the sound of their own sweet strains leaped about with the agility and grace of so many giant frogs. The *kapoorahle* was so long of

bedizenizing himself, that the *kohrahle* (petty chief), in the most disrespectful way, ordered the goddess to appear forthwith; and all the tam-tams gave a ruff that would have awakened the Seven Sleepers. I bore it with heroic patience. In the meantime, we heard, inside the dehwahle, the tinkling of cymbals, and the sounds of other instruments, interrupted now and then by shrieks of maniacal laughter. At last the prophet appeared. On his arms were the inspiring bangles, and in each hand he carried a piece of coloured cloth, folded up like a fan: with considerable ingenuity, he had made out of various coloured cloths a sort of flounced gown, somewhat like the dress occasionally seen on Malabar women. The upper part of his body was uncovered, and his long hair unbound; the nether-integuments consisted of long tight drawers. As he came out, the kohrahle, begging pardon, said that it was very unlucky to remain seated. I explained, that being of another religion, I could not in any way be affected; but he looked so distressed, that I stood up. However, the goddess settled the matter by saying that the raja might sit; and sit he did.

The tam-tams now recommenced, and the kapoorahle began dancing, after the native manner, moving in a circle, with sidelong strides, advancing his hands, with an undulating snake-like motion of the arm. When a quicker tune was played, he suited himself to the measure, executing a figure not unlike the 'one, two, three, and a hop' of dancing school-days. In the height of his antics, the goddess, to my surprise and amusement, called most importunately for beetel, the native substitute for tobacco; and as none was forthcoming, alluded to that creature-comfort in terms of marked reprobation of the bystanders. At last a quid was stuffed into her prophet's mouth; and after he had been well rubbed down—good cause was there for that—the dancing went on with as great vigour as ever. Occasionally, the man would stop, and looking upwards, utter the peculiar hissing sound previously mentioned; and I observed, that however violently the head might be shaken from side to side, it seemed to have no forward or backward motion at all. At one time, an amusing strife arose between the tam-tam beaters and the goddess. According to the figure, the former were to walk backwards in a circle, while she constantly advanced towards them; now the musicians declared, that on no account could they turn their backs towards the rajah. The goddess remonstrated; and the matter was at last settled by a smaller circle, at some little distance, being formed, and by the tam-tam beaters begging pardon each time they passed my chair of state. I sat it out for about two hours, in order to see the swoon at the conclusion, being determined to feel the man's pulse at the time; but learning that the prophet intended to exhibit his activity so long as I remained, I took pity on him, and went off to bed, soon after which the crowd dispersed.

I should have observed, that the kapoorahle's whole frame was occasionally convulsed with a curious quivering motion, which it would be extremely difficult to imitate in cold blood. When a kapoorahle dies, it is the demon itself which selects the new prophet. The natives have considerable faith in the responses, although I have heard some of them say with a smile: 'Sometimes things happen as was foretold.' As to the dancing being involuntary, a good many are somewhat sceptical; yet, when disaster threatens their own families, one and all rush to the dehwahle. A long and painful discussion has been going on for some time in Ceylon, regarding the appointment of persons to manage the lands belonging to these demon-temples. Government insists upon having a more or less direct influence on these elections, and the opposing party maintains that a Christian government should not have anything to do with such matters at all.

THE WIFE'S REPLY.

THOU askest me what offerings bright
From climes beyond the sea,
Thou mayst collect with loving pride,
To lavish upon me?

I seek not costly gems to grace
My brow: thou say'st 'tis fair—
And if it be, why, love, should I
Thy glance with jewels share?

Why speakest thou of Orient pearls
To lay upon my breast?

I have a treasure dearer far,
And fitter there to rest:

Thy child and mine my bosom claims,
Thereon repose to seek,
And all the pearls the ocean hides
Are worthless near his cheek.

And when upon his face I gaze,
With rapture there I see
What pearls or diamonds could not yield—
A likeness, love, of thee.

Speak then no more of things like these;
When thou com'st home again,
The joy of seeing thee will make
All other treasures vain.

But if thou wouldst that joy increase,
I'll gladly tell thee how—
Bring, bring me back thy heart again
As much my own as now!

RUTH BUCK.

GRIMSBY.

THE DRUSE WOMEN.

Whilst the master of the house is asleep, the wife and daughter wash up the cooking utensils and put these by till evening; the children go forth on various errands of amusement, else fall asleep under the shade of the nearest tree. The wife has minor duties to attend to in the village; so she leaves us alone with the eldest daughter, who is a buxom lass of between sixteen and seventeen, and who, sitting down near us, enters into conversation without the least restraint or affectation. This fact alone proves that the Druses are not that jealous people they are sometimes represented to be, nor are their women such slaves to the prevailing Mohammedan custom in Syria of excluding their sex from the companionship of men: this rigid law has only effect in the intercourse of the Druses with each other, or with the Turks; and this fact also proves that they have greater confidence in the good faith and honour of Christians and strangers than they can place upon their own fraternity. If we may judge by the sample before us, the Druse women are not one whit behind their sisters in more civilised countries as far as regards natural sharpness of intellect, and even wit; they possess, beyond a doubt, the rough unpolished matter, which, when worked up, would constitute what is styled elegance and manners—a perfect illustration of the aptitude of that ancient proverb which says, that the roughest surface often contains within it the greatest mineral wealth. Somehow or other, the Druses, in common with all classes inhabiting Syria, are born with a natural tendency to politeness and etiquette. This is more particularly the case with the women; the wildest mountain-girl possesses a refinement of manners, an elegance of deportment, and a delicacy of speech, which one might seek for in vain amongst a similar class in England and France. That heavy awkward gesture and speech, so familiar to clodhoppers, and which so immediately stamps the creature with the class he belongs to, is never to be met with in the East.—*Chasseaud's Druses of the Lebanon.*

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